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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/687,737	10/20/2003	Shotaro Mochizuki	2003_1428A	9264

513 7590 03/23/2004

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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, SON T

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3643

DATE MAILED: 03/23/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/687,737	Applicant(s) MOCHIZUKI, SHOTARO	
	Examiner Son T. Nguyen	Art Unit 3643	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 October 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Son T. Nguyen
Pin Exm 3643

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>10/20/03</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. **Claims 1-4** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The claims are method claims but there are no steps associated with the method. In addition, it appears that there are multiple or a plurality of bamboo fibers and wood fibers creating this body; however, applicant only claims "a dry bamboo fiber" and "a wood fiber"? Furthermore, it is unclear how the transpiring paths are infinite in number? It would be better to state multiple or a plurality instead of infinite because infinite represents endless and from the invention, the body is not an endless mass to have infinite paths.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. **Claims 1-4** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US 619233 (herein 233).

For claims 1 & 2, 233 discloses a method of manufacturing a granulated body comprising a dry bamboo fiber and/or a wood fiber (col. 5, lines 20-26) as chief material;

Art Unit: 3643

the bamboo and wood fibers are mixed with each other while adding moisture thereto and the bamboo fiber is allowed to absorb the moisture (col. 6, lines 1-10); the resultant is granulated to form a wet granulated body; the body is then dried (col. 6, line 24); moisture absorbed in the bamboo fiber is transpired outward through the body by drying (automatically occurs when the fiber is dried); and a porous structure is produced with multiple number of transpiring paths to obtain a porous structure (see figures). However, 233 lacks drying by use of hot air. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to dry the bamboo fibers of 233 by hot air, for such process is notoriously well known in the art to speed up the drying process instead of letting it dry over time.

For claims 3 & 4, in addition to the above, 233 teaches a water sensitive coagulant composed of powder is mixed together with the bamboo and wood fibers, and the resultant is admixed in a non-hydraulic state (col. 8, lines 44-58).

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Son T. Nguyen whose telephone number is (703) 305-0765. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter Poon, can be reached at (703) 308-2574. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to Customer Service at (703) 872-9325. The official fax number is 703-872-9306.

Application/Control Number: 10/687,737

Page 4

Art Unit: 3643

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Son T. Nguyen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Son T. Nguyen

Primary Examiner, GAU 3643

March 19, 2004